



MARCH, 1984

## DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS EMPLOYEE'S NEWSLETTER

## GUEST COLUMN

The Gross Vehicle Weight Division contributes to the overall mission of the Department by operating weigh stations throughout the state and by producing sizable amounts of revenue for the highway program. The Division presently has a complement of 103 employees, 79 of which are involved with enforcement activities and 24 which handle interstate licensing, GVW licensing, size and weight permits, accounting functions, and administrative duties in the Helena office.

The Enforcement Bureau strives to provide the broadest coverage possible in monitoring the movement of the trucking industry. This is done by operating weigh stations as many hours a day and as many days a week as possible with our present personnel. In addition, we have significantly increased portable weighing by roving crews in recent years. As a point of interest, a recent "Hit" by a roving crew in the Great Falls District resulted in fines of \$6,830 on four overweight grain trucks, one of which was in excess of 40,000 pounds overweight.

In addition to enforcing size and weight laws, the Enforcement Bureau performs numerous other duties of issuing GVW licenses; issuing registration, fuel, size and weight, and custom combine permits; vehicle registration inspections; operating authority inspections; vehicle safety inspections; issuing citations for violations of law; and assisting other law enforcement agencies where possible.

During the past three years, 22 new enforcement officer positions have been authorized by the Legislature, which is a 44% increase in staff. This increase has allowed for a more effective effort, particularly at a time when we have a very large amount of work going into restoration and improvement of our highways. Another significant improvement underway is a project to replace scale instruments at weigh stations with updated equipment and larger scale platforms to accommodate today's vehicle configurations. Also, in the "pipeline" are new weigh stations which will be located at Clearwater Junction and west of Havre.

Functions of the Helena office, though not as visible as field activities, nevertheless make a very significant contribution to the

Department in terms of revenue. One large Section deals with the licensing of interstate fleets of commercial vehicles through our participation in the International Registration Plan and the Western Prorate Compact. These agreements provide for the "prorating" of fees on the basis of miles traveled in a given state and presently encompass 32 states and two provinces in Canada. This registration process is the same as that which is done by County Treasurers for personal and intra-state vehicles.

Another Section deals in the issuance of GVW licenses for Montana intra-state trucks and assists the Enforcement Bureau and 56 counties in collection of GVW fees and the sales tax on new motor vehicles. This Section provides a very important service, since the counties collect a large sum of money which goes into the highway fund.

Issuance of size and weight permits for loads entering Montana, preparation of self-issuing size and weight permits, and analysis of requests to move extremely heavy loads are handled by the Special Permits Section. Permits are sent literally across the country by telecopier networks furnished by private companies, since vehicles hauling oversize and overweight loads are required by law to have the permit on board when entering the state. This Section also assists the Enforcement Bureau and private industry on size and weight permit administration and determination of legal gross weights for combinations of vehicles.

The Centralized Services Section handles the necessary depositing, accounting, and reporting work for both the field and office collections of money. They also maintain our inventory control on various permits and perform other services of payroll, claims, and sending supplies to the field, to name but a few. This Section is an important part of the Division in that it is here that it all comes together.

GVW fee and permit fee collections totaled \$11,587,411 by the GVW Division and \$10,216,179 by the counties during fiscal 1983 for a grand total of \$21,803,590 which was deposited to the highway fund. The GVW Division collected an additional \$5,795,495 in property taxes and \$170,790 in registration fees through "Prorate" licensing plus \$66,475 in custom combine permits, all

of which was distributed to the counties.

We are pleased with our contribution to the overall mission of the Department and look forward to improving and broadening our operations to ensure future success.

**Donald R. Copley, Administrator**  
**Gross Vehicle Weight Division**

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**WOMEN IN STATE GOVERNMENT**

The first of a bi-weekly series of workshops covering a variety of topics of concern to women employed in state government began February 1st. The topic of this session was **Women In State Government: Successes, Progress, and the Changing Role of Women in the Work Force**. These **Women In State Government** classes will be conducted over a 16-week period and will cover other topics such as: **Psychological, Sociological and Educational Aspects of Women and Work; Career Development; Developing Management Effectiveness; Communication Effectiveness; Quality of WorkLife—Stress, Burnout; Women in a Technological World; and The Future**. Each session is presented by women and men from state government, universities and the private sector.

The course is being offered through the Department of Administration (DOA) and is co-sponsored by the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee for Women (ICCW). It is geared toward women employed at all levels in state government. Men are also welcome to attend.

The fee is \$25, which includes the cost of all eight classes, and is paid for by the Montana Department of Highways. Since this course is considered by our Safety & Training Bureau to be an employee development course, employees must use accrued annual leave or accrued compensatory leave to attend, or arrangements may be made between the supervisor and employee to make up the time absent from work.

It is hoped that this **Women In State Government** course will be offered again by the DOA so many will be able to attend.

## PERSONNEL PROFILE



### BREWER

Kevin Brewer is the new Field Maintenance Supervisor on the Deep Creek Canyon section of US-12 northeast of Townsend. At 28, Kevin is a seven-year veteran of the Department's maintenance forces, having started in the Lewistown Division. He replaces Wally Ringer, who retired. Before joining the Highway Department, Kevin attended college for a short time at Bozeman, and then operated bulldozers and trucks for the county.

After his promotion last November, Kevin, his wife Vicky, and two daughters, became one of about 12 families who live in Department owned section houses. Vicky says it took nearly a month before the 1937 era section house at Deep Creek felt like home. A new coat of paint, and wallpapering, including a bedroom with attractive hand-cut butterflys, display her warm feminine touch.

Kevin and other maintenance workers from the White Sulphur Springs section are also in the process of painting the interiors of the equipment buildings. Exterior work will have to wait for spring weather.

Kevin says he and his family enjoy country living. He is used to it, having grown up on a ranch near Ringling. One of the charms of living away from town is being able to see nearly 200 head of elk graze almost daily on a nearby hillside.

Off-duty time for Kevin is spent mainly hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling. This spring he is planning a fishing trip to the border waters between Minnesota and Canada.

## FREE SPREE

Vic Freeman, a mechanic in the Helena Equipment Shop, recently had a three-minute shopping spree courtesy of the State Capitol Employees Credit Union.

Vic, who won the free spree in a drawing, was allowed to take one of any item in the store. He filled a cart with meats, and had a second cart about half full of frozen foods before his timer ran out. In all, he grabbed \$345.12 worth of groceries, and a single carton of cigarettes.

"We went in and looked at the layout before hand," Vic said, "but when the time comes three minutes isn't very long—it gets kind of confusing."



**DEEP CREEK CANYON section house—one of 12 section houses around the state.**

## INTERPRETING THOSE LINES

The national rule book for highway pavement markings is the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices prepared by a National Advisory Committee representing a wide range of organizations concerned with traffic problems and approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

For anyone who needs a refresher course in understanding what the different pavement markings mean, the manual will explain. Longitudinal pavement markings, the book says, shall conform to the following basic concepts:

1. Yellow lines delineate the separation of traffic flows in opposing directions or mark the left edge of the pavement of divided highways and one-way roads.
2. White lines delineate the separation of traffic flows in the same direction or mark the right edge of the pavement.
3. Broken lines are permissive in character.
4. Solid lines are restrictive in character.
5. Width of line indicates the degree of emphasis.
6. Double lines indicate maximum restrictions.
7. Markings which must be visible at night shall be reflectorized unless ambient illumination assures adequate visibility.



## MISSOULA DISTRICT

by Kathy Baker

District Engineer from Missoula, Vern Borden, attended the 1984 Highways and Transportation Management Institute in February. This educational seminar was held at the University of Mississippi from February 5 through February 23, 1984. Four class sessions were held daily, Monday through Saturday, and coupled with other Institute activities, provided a good insight into transportation management.

According to Ben Miller, District Construction Supervisor from Missoula, the last grading project on I-90 has been let. Washington Construction of Missoula is the successful bidder on the project, with work scheduled to commence the first part of March. Jim Cyr is the field project manager in charge of the work. This project entails 6.8 miles of interstate beginning west of St. Regis extending 2 miles east of St. Regis. Mr. Miller stated that 220 working days have been allocated to complete this project which would put completion in mid 1985, but it is thought the work will be finished prior to that date. This will be the last 4-lane grading project done on I-90 to complete the system.

Jack Seelye of Kalispell retired on March 2, 1984 as shop foreman in the Kalispell Equipment Section. Jack has contributed 30 years of service to the Department of Highways. His friends and co-workers wish him a prosperous and healthy retirement.

Robert May will transfer from the Kalispell Equipment Section to the Department of State Lands in March, 1984. Robert has worked for the State since first being hired as a mechanic in April of 1954. After nearly 30 years of service to the Department of Highways he is transferring his expertise to yet another area of State service. Good luck and continued success.

Crushing operations have begun on the Columbia Falls East & West project, according to Larry Brazda, Assistant Construction Supervisor of Kalispell. This is a 4-lane through Columbia Falls extending for 4.3 miles at an estimated cost of \$5.4 million. Tri-State Construction of Belview, Washington was the successful bidder on the project. The estimated completion date is July of 1985.

An unnamed employee of the Highway Department reported receiving a birthday card recently that stated,

"You have reached the OUT-AGE. Everything is either falling out, wearing out, or spreading out!"

From the many of us who can sympathize with that predicament, Happy Birthday anyway!!!!



## GREAT FALLS DISTRICT

by Lowell Smith

Tom Barnard, District Engineer, and Art Braut, Chief—Maintenance Bureau, traveled to Idaho to learn more about their method of storing traffic line paint in bulk quantities. The information received from officials of the Idaho Highway Department was very positive and Art and Tom are now looking into the feasibility of implementing this method in the Great Falls District. The initial cost would require purchasing two 10,000 gallon tanks with pumps and a nurse truck to supply the striper. It is estimated that the Department would save somewhere in the area of \$1.00 per gallon in paint and reduced labor costs.

The Communications Department has just recently completed installation of the new high band radio network in the Great Falls District. This will offer many advantages over the low band system including, among other things, mobile to mobile contact at much greater distances, giving the Great Falls Headquarters direct contact with all units in the Havre area along with the Great Falls units, and a mutual aid channel on which all units can talk to law enforcement and emergency personnel.

Many of the employees in the Great Falls District have been busy attending one or more training seminars currently being conducted throughout the District. The Safety and Training Section has provided us with various courses such as, Defensive Driving, ESL, Communication Skills and a 5-day Train the Trainer course in Missoula. Jake Liebelt, Hugh Larson, Harry Strong and Boyd Wolverton took the instructor training in Defensive Driving and will conduct all future DDS courses in the Great Falls District.

Boyd Wolverton, Section Supervisor, and Jim Blossom, Lab Supervisor, attended the 5-day Train the Trainer course in Missoula. Boyd will be involved in the area of maintenance related training and Jim with Lab and Construction related training.

## CORRECTION!

The photo of last year's eight outstanding employees, featured in the December, 1983 issue of "The Interchange", was inadvertently flipped. Therefore, the faces are just reversed of the names listed. We apologize for the error.

## BILLINGS DISTRICT

### OLDEST HIGHWAY EMPLOYEE

#### RETIRES

by Kelly Nelson

The end of 1983 brought about the beginning of a new life for Herb Noennig. Herb retired as the Communications Tech III from the Billings office on December 30, 1983. Being nearly 72, Herb was the oldest Highway employee in the state.



NOENNIG

Herb was born March 24, 1912, in Portland, Oregon. Moving all over the United States as a child, his family finally settled in Chicago, Illinois. This was where he met his wife, Edna Hamilton, while they were both working in a wholesale music house in 1936. They were wed June 11, 1938, and since have raised five children, and now also have six grandchildren.

Herb has lead an interesting life. As a teen, it was determined he was growing too fast for his age, and had a leakage of the heart. This limited his physical activities, so he spent a lot of time in libraries reading. It was there that he taught himself how to make a radio. From that point on, radios played a big part in Herb's life.

After attending a flight radio operators school in Kansas City, Missouri, Herb was hired by Northwest Airlines and was transferred to Billings as a summer replacement. He then accepted a job offer in Chicago because of better advancement opportunities.

While in Chicago, Herb received a dispatchers license and transferred to Minneapolis as a dispatcher.

World War II started up, and Herb accepted a position as a Civilian Air Traffic Controller in Anchorage, Alaska, while his family moved to Illinois to live with his wife's mother.

When the war came to an end, Herb and his family moved back to Minneapolis where he began to work for Northwest Airlines again as a flight radio operator. He flew from Minneapolis to Tokyo and back with a crew of six others, being gone about two weeks at a time. After about a year Herb grew tired of all the travel and being away from his family, so he chose to quit and move back to Billings. Exactly two weeks after he quit, the plane and crew he usually flew with crashed into the side of a glacier in Alaska, leaving no survivors.

In Billings, Herb started working two jobs. One job was being a "Combo Man" (an-

nouncer/engineer) for KBYM Radio in Billings. His other job was a part-time position at a music store.

After quitting those jobs, he accepted a sales position for a flooring store in Billings. It was there he learned of the job opening for the Department of Highways.

On April 14, 1952, Art Zion, Chief of the Communications Bureau, hired Herb as a Supervisor in Communications. At that time the radio system was only about one and one-half years old, and only employed two other people for the entire state. On July 10, 1959, Herb retired, and on November 1, 1960, was rehired as a Radio Engineer P-1.

On June 30, 1975, Communication was transferred to the Department of Administration. Then on July 1, 1980, he was transferred back to the Department of Highways as a Communications Tech III, and remained there until he retired on December 30, 1983.

Herb's age won't slow him down. In addition to knowing how to speak some French and Spanish (for which he is now taking a "brush-up" course at Eastern Montana College), he can also read and write German. He builds, repairs, and tunes pipe organs and other types of organs. He states this has been keeping him real busy. Also, being a radio "buff", he is planning to put his own "HAM" radio station together.

Herb and Edna have travel plans, including a trip to Sitka, Alaska.

When asked if Herb would miss the work and the people of the Department he said that he thought he would at first, but with all his activities and plans that he has "been too busy to notice." But the people in the Billings office will miss his smiling face and his kind words. We all wish him the best, whatever he does and wherever he goes.



**SWEDE JENSEN, Field Maintenance Supervisor, Bozeman, receives \$200 from Governor Schwinden for his idea on a more effective method to replace concrete median barriers.**



## STATE HIGHWAY MAP

Bob Keck, supervisor of the Program Development Division's special studies section, is getting ready to produce Montana's State Highway Map again. This may be Bob's last time since he is talking about retiring. Bob has spent 41 years with the Department of Highways.



KECK

years of 1943 to 1946. Since 1979 the map has been produced every two years.

When Bob first began working with the map in 1956, the Department did not own the base map as it does today. At that time outside contractors supplied the base, which is a map produced for the specific purpose of being periodically revised. Rand-McNally was usually the low bidder then.

In 1970 the Department bought its own base from the H. M. Gousha Company. The working elements of the map—some 37 scribe coats, positives, negatives, masks, and screens, are on file in the Planning and Statistics Bureau.

Producing the map is at least a six-month job, normally beginning in July, although an active file on the map is maintained year-round. First, specifications for the new map must be drawn up and advertised for bidding.

Meanwhile, the Department checks to see if any highways under its jurisdiction have changed from the previous map. Numerous requests are also received to place various items on the map. These requests are reviewed and approved or disapproved on their merit, or on established policy. Generally commercial names are kept off the map because of limited space.

About 40 agencies are regularly contacted for input into the map. These agencies include the U.S. Forest Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Department, Canadian provinces, and bordering states.

They indicate changes to roads, place names, campgrounds, rest areas, historic sites, dams and reservoirs, hospitals, ambulance services, radio stations, and many other details. Each time the map is produced 500 to 600 changes are made.

The Travel Promotion Bureau, once with the Highway Department and now with the

Department of Commerce, prepares the cover side of the map. This entails artwork, photos, a message from the Governor, and listings of major events and tourist attractions.

By September the contract for preparing the map is awarded to the lowest bidding company. Changes, additions, and deletions are sent to the map contractor by mid-September. The contractor has 60 calendar days to prepare a proof. Proof copies are ready for review by December. Upon approval the maps are contracted for printing and are ready for distribution by the first part of January.

The printing of the 1983-84 map ran to 1.4 million copies. Bob thinks the number of maps printed will go up to about two million, since Montana will experience more visitors in the next few years due to the Worlds Fair in British Columbia in 1986, the Winter Olympics in Calgary in 1988, and Montana's Centennial in 1989.

The state map is prepared and printed out of Highway funds. The budget for the 1985-86 map is 160,000 dollars.

Over the years Bob has seen a number of changes in the way the map is produced. At one time it took six people nearly two months to compile the mileage table indicating the shortest route between two cities. Now, with the use of computers, it takes a few hours to enter the data and about 15 minutes of actual computer time to produce the information.

In the years he has been producing the map, Bob has found that people really do read and care about it. One year he asked the company preparing the map to make a minor, last-minute change to the Interstate alignment south of Helena, near Clancy. In moving the road, the name of Clancy was lifted off the map and, in error, left off. After the map was printed the error was discovered, and a resolution was passed in Montana's legislative session to "restore the great and historic name of Clancy" to the state's highway map.

## RETIREMENTS

Employees who have recently retired with over 25 years of service with the Department include: Donald E. Alfson, 32 years, 8 months; James A. Vincent, 29 years, 10 months; Thomas Lunceford, 27 years, 9 months; and Herbert R. Noennig, 25 years, 9 months. Other employees who have recently retired are Dale E. Conover, 24 years; Arthur R. Dors, 14 years, 6 months; Ross R. Rennick, 11 years, 3 months; and Warren D. Cork, 7 years, 6 months.

## LETTERS

Dear Mr. Wicks:

The Montana Standard wrote a complimentary editorial on the excellent work done by our Montana Highway maintenance crews, Friday, December 16th. My husband responded with a letter in which he specifically praised the two maintenance men who are responsible for the excellent work done in keeping Highway #10 over Pipestone Pass open and in good condition. His letter was published in the 'Our Readers Speak' column on Christmas Day.

Jim Williams and Dick Holmes are two of the nicest, most courteous and conscientious young men we know. I speak not only for us, but for many, many others when I say their efforts on our behalf in keeping the highway open at all times are deeply appreciated.

A couple years ago, when the Highway Department came out with classifying the roads with varying degrees of winter maintenance, the people who depend on Highway #10 over Pipestone Pass were concerned as it sounded as if we would not receive adequate snow removal and sanding. But this did not come to pass. Our highway has been steadily maintained to a high, dependable standard, as it always has been from the Cricks Camp Maintenance Shop. There have been times when Homestake Pass has been closed. Pipestone Pass has never been closed, thanks to Jim and Dick and the efficient maintenance men before them. . . .

Sincerely,  
Billye Wallace  
Whitehall, MT

Dear Mr. Wicks:

I wish to express my appreciation for the excellent maintenance of our Montana highways during the winter. On many trips to Idaho, we are always impressed with the difference between the two states. The Montana sign is a welcome sight, although it is really not necessary, because the condition of the roads is always an indication that we are home, and thankful to be there.

Best wishes for a Happy New Year, and keep up the good work!

Sincerely yours,  
Bernadine Lohman  
Butte, MT

Montana State Library



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1800 copies of this newsletter were produced at a cost of \$.08 each.  
Les Benedict, Information Officer, Editor